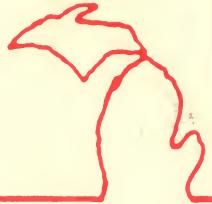


MID MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE



february 1987

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Atari News

Compiled by John Nagy

The BIGGEST NEWS this month is ATARI's announcements of a whole new redesigned ST line, a laser printer, and an IBM COMPATIBLE computer... See all the details inside, as we recap the excitement of the WINTER CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW from LAS VEGAS.

ATARI STOCK WATCH: Nearly three months after the introduction of 4.5 million shares of common stock (all sold on the FIRST DAY of release at about \$11.50), ATARI stock is over \$20 a share. Trading has been heavy in the AMERICAN STOCK EXCHANGE, typically around 100,000 shares trading per day. The announcements at the LAS VEGAS CES of the new products gave the stock a spurt of action that took it over \$20 from the \$16-\$18 it had been for a few weeks. That's nearly doubling in a quarter year! Have you picked a color for your new Mercedes yet?

GRAND RAPIDS joins MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE; MID-MICHIGAN MAGAZINE to undergo changes; read about them in the PUBLISHERS PAGE.

ANTIC ONLINE (an electronic news service that was/was not/is presented as part of COMPUVERSE INFORMATION SERVICES) apparently resolved its differences with CIS. It is back after an announcement this fall that it was leaving the service. There is a "new look" and promises of more and better features to come, all on CIS. No explanation has been circulated as to what the flap was all about. Many ATARI club newsletters rely heavily on ANTIC ONLINE for information, and are happy to see things patched up.

PC PURSUIT (a service that allows unlimited night calling to long distance BBS's for \$25 flat rate per month) has just added 11 more area codes, bringing their coverage for calling to 25 major areas, 42% of the country. There are plans to add more during 1987. Although Michigan's 313 area code IS included and the 517 and 616 ARE NOT included, most parts of Michigan CAN get the service to call INTO the other areas. For more information, call PC PURSUIT at (800) 368-4215.

Meanwhile, our government is considering re-regulation of "packet telecommunication services" that, if approved, may make services like COMPUVERSE and particularly PC PURSUIT too expensive to operate. Now under consideration are proposals that would let the formerly BELL companies charge service rates to competitors for packet service (that's the computer communication circuits) instead of the free access they are now required to provide. The current system was devised to encourage competition and lower rates; the "big guys" want to reverse this to restructure their profit ratios. The additional charges could be around \$4.00 an hour by some estimates... and DOUBLE that for PC PURSUIT (since it has TWO accesses per call, one at each end of the long-distance link). You can still tell your representatives what you think... do it NOW since this proposal looks like it may be passed in FEBRUARY! Write to: Honorable Mark Fowler, Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission, Washington D.C. 20554. Refer to "Computer Inquiry III" in your letters. State clearly, in your own words, that competitive packet switching services should not be reregulated or subjected to carrier access charges, and then explain why not. If this proposal passes, prepare to give up telecommunications services and cheap long distance access.





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LDW Basic Compiler	:	\$ 69.95	Flight Simulator II	:	\$ 44.95

If you purchase over \$100.00 worth of items at any one time with us you are qualified for the CASTLE DISCOUNT. The Castle Discount gives you 10% off of our price on anything in the store except hardware.

* This is a package item call for details on the package.

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This publication is the official newsletter of several independent groups of Atari 8-bit and 16-bit computer users. It is intended for the information and education of their members as well as the dissemination of Atari related information. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the respective author and are not in any way official opinions of the associated user groups.

Other non-commercial USER GROUPS are granted permission to reprint articles from this magazine provided credit is given to the respective author as well as to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Most original files are available from the C.H.A.O.S. BBS upon request, and also appear in DL7 on COMPUSERVE for downloading.

Subscriptions to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine are included with memberships in any of the participating clubs, or directly from the MAGAZINE for \$12.00 per year to addresses in the U.S. Use the address below for subscriptions and inquiries.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions from readers are encouraged. If possible, please make your submissions by electronic means. Submissions are accepted on the C.H.A.O.S. BBS (517-371-1106), or on disk-by-mail or by giving a disk to an Editor. All submissions must be received by the 20th to be considered for the next month's issue.

NOTES TO OTHER CLUBS

Please be certain that you are mailing to the correct address (be sure which club it is that is exchanging this magazine with you!) (See below) and NOT to the return mail address. Exchanges of newsletters are encouraged.

C.H.A.O.S.
Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

We are also soliciting other Michigan Atari clubs for affiliation with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. We can offer MORE total pages and LOWER production costs per copy, with no loss in your local input. Contact C.H.A.O.S. for more information.

Editor's Note

WE NEED ADS!!!

Rich Barnes



PUBLISHERS PAGE
JOHN NAGY, C.H.A.O.S.
(517) 487-5646

This is the FINAL ISSUE of MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE!!!!

Don't panic. March 1987 will bring the FIRST issue of MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE... a subtle but important change. Another change will be (I HOPE!!!) increased size and a cover price of \$1.50. There are no current plans to change the costs to the clubs.



MULTIPLE CHOICE: IN THIS PICTURE, THE MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE EDITOR IS HAVING IT EXPLAINED TO HIM THAT:

1. He can't call after 10 PM.
2. There are too many CLUB pages.
3. There's not enough CLUB pages.
4. There are not enough technical articles.
5. There are not enough beginner articles.
6. There are too many 8-bit articles.
7. There are too many ST articles.
8. The deadline is too early.
9. The delivery date is too late.
10. He cut an article he shouldn't have.
11. He ran an article he shouldn't have.
12. Even as a volunteer, he overcharges.
13. ALL OF THE ABOVE.



I hope to arrange some kind of conference for all the contributing clubs in the near future to sound out what you all want from the MAGAZINE. The more I talk to many club leaders, the more I am amazed at the very differnet perspectives and expectations they all have. Maybe if we got together we could see each others needs more clearly... and maybe our own, too. With any endeavor of this size, there are always problems. I really don't mind hearing complaints about what went in, what didn't go in, what came late, etc., because thots we find out what to do next... But SO MANY comments are in direct contradiction with each other!

Things are actually going fairly well, and even the complaints I get (dramatized in the cartoon above) are usually coupled with compliments in general. We ARE trying to satisfy you. Our enjoyment of the project (and therefore, our commitment) depends on it!

Next month we will also be welcoming our EIGHTH club, as GRAND RAPIDS joins us and swells our subscriber circulation to well over 700. This addition may be the last for a while, as the size and costs of the magazine continue to climb out of reach. We MAY add some smaller clubs and allow them each a single column for local information and contact people... or just encourage group rate subscriptions. What do YOU think is best?

As we have grown, the "MID" just seemed to get in the way. Rich Barnes is now asking when we plan to add clubs in INDIANA and OHIO (we in fact got a few of those requests!). I just ask him how "WESTERN HEMISPHERE ATARI MAGAZINE" stikes him...

The next major accomplishments I hope for are stabilizing our advertising, then going after significant out-of-area subscriptions as well as counter sales.

What's on YOUR mind? Lets get together on it SOON!

Rumors

EXPRESS! 1030 version 3.0 will not be released. Before you panic, it's only because author of the incredibly popular public domain terminal software, KEITH LEDBETTER, plans to go directly to version 3.1. The entire line of EXPRESS! programs (for the 850 type HAYES, the 1030/XM301, and the MPP) were to be configured the same for a new version #3.0. The one for the 850 was released in the early fall, to be followed in short order by the 1030 and MPP versions. However, Keith decided to included improved XMODEM and YMODEM routines and call it

3.1, since the DOC for 3.0 was already released. There have been some delays, but expect the new versions at almost any time.

It seems the SUPRA hard drives for the ST are out selling the ATARI brand hard drives by quite a margin. It may be more marketing and cosmetics than price or performance. The SUPRA is based on a 3 1/2" drive, considerably smaller than the ATARI 5 1/4" unit. Another reason may be that SUPRA has had much more advertising.

Speaking of SUPRA ADVERTISING, we have seen full page ads for their ST HARD DRIVE in MANY club newsletters around the country. MANY. Yet when we have called them about advertising with MID-MICHIGAN ATARI MAGAZINE, they have REPEATEDLY told our reps that "Oh, we DON'T PAY for those, the clubs just run them for their information value." Is this an outright lie?? When pinned on specifics, they back down a bit - "CURRENT NOTES? Oh yeah, we DID advertise there... but that's the only one..." Let me name a dozen others. Or, better, let me name some one who is sure NOT to believe anything else we hear from SUPRA...

ATARI ST COLOR MONITORS are not all created equal. There are at least two distinctly different versions by different manufaturérs, and maybe more. And the picture quality is not equal either. It seems the OLDER monitors are noticably sharper. BE AWARE of what you get! Shop around.

THUNDER!, a terrific word processor accessory for spell checking and more, will NOT WORK with 1ST WORD... sorta. Actually, it will not work in the ACCESSORY mode with REFORMATTED 1ST WORD files, since the extra spaces the formating puts in the file mess up THUNDER!'s operation. So, use it in GEM mode, and it should perform fine.

DISK DRIVE PROBLEMS have been reported on the internal drive in the 1040 ST. Although ATARI only rates their drive for 80 sectors, most drives are CAPABLE of accessing more. VIP and other programs force the drive to go beyond the 80th sector, and SOME machines just can't do it. ATARI says it's not their problem, since they published the specs. VIP says get a different drive. Cute.

At the other end of the spectrum: ATARI showed a new CASSETTE drive at the CES... YIKE. Actually, tape is POPULAR overseas, where the cost of a disk system is much higher than stateside. One company offers an upgrade called "RAMBIT" (sound familiar?) that is actually for increasing the tape data transfer rate from the normal 600 baud up to 3600 baud. IMAGINE! Tape loads of worthwhile sized programs in well under fifteen minutes! It costs 18 pounds.





CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

SERVING THE LANSING AREA AREA

C.H.A.O.S. is the CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY, serving the ATARI community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The CAMPUS HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are \$12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities as well as access to our other resources.

Dues may be paid at any regular C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBS's at (517) 371-1106, 24 hours a day at 300/1200 baud.
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Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships and etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
PO Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

Meetings take place on the 2nd and 3rd Saturdays of each month, at the MSU Physics-Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.

S.T.I.N.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month.

The General meeting, for 8-bit Atari owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of each month. DIRECTIONS TO MEETING PLACE:

East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying and any violation of copyright laws are not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, nor are allowed on the club BBS.

ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICERS OF C.H.A.O.S.

Position	Name	Phone #
President	Leo Sell	349-0404
Vice President	John Nagy	487-5646
Sec'y-Treasurer	Gary Ferris	392-2593
8-bit Rep.	Adam Slonim	485-7348
16-bit Rep.	John Johnson	355-4219
Membership Coord.	Gary Ferris	392-2593
Library Manager	John Baker	641-4430
Asst. Librarian	Malcolm Cleveland	485-6743
Asst. Librarian	Sally Nagy	484-1976
ST Librarian	Mark Smathers	627-2590
Publ. Librarian	Richard Evans	351-2281
Program Coord.	Guy Hurt	484-7675
ST SIG Coord.	Brian Goluska	332-4415
BBS System Op.	John Nagy	487-5646
BBS Librarian	John Baker	641-4430
C.H.A.O.S. Editor	Jeff Bone	321-5510

Presidential address

by Leo Sell

Here it is February already. We're in the midst of the weather that keeps us inside at our keyboards doing all kinds of constructive things. Like learning a new programming language, or a new database, or a new adventure. You don't have cabin fever if you have an Atari!!

Things continue to improve within the club. New additions are being made to the public domain libraries (both 8 and 16 bit). The same is true of the publications library. We are taking steps to broaden our resource material so that we will have more ST related publications. And the newsletter continues to grow and improve. Of course, all of these things are opportunities for you to get involved and help out. For instance, we need an ST owner/member to help out by taking responsibility for the ST portion of the publications library. Ideally, the ST specific books and magazines, and the more general materials that relate to both 8 and 16 bit, will be at the ST meeting. So step forward and volunteer.





JANUARY ST-UTTERINGS

by Brian Goluksa

The ST special interest group of CHAOS meets the 2nd Saturday of each month, at the Physics-Astronomy building of MSU. See the CHAOS title page for directions.

Fifteen ST users braved the snowstorm to attend the January meeting. Since last meeting we learned how to use the overhead viewing system, so that the ST video could be displayed on the dozens of overhead TV sets. Quality is noticeably less than a color monitor, but the ease of viewing from anywhere in the room is nice. A VCR, 2 standard Atari to TV boxes, and several other cables were required make the connection. We are still going to try to find a simpler cabling method.

Mark Smathers had his upgraded 520 ST (1 Meg), and he demonstrated CRYSTAL (from Antic) and MICRO MANAGER (from Blue Moon products). Both of these commercial products are productivity tools. For instance, among other functions, CRYSTAL allows a disk to be formatted without going back to the desktop. This is a boon to anyone who has ever been in the middle of a long article or drawing, and realized that they had no formatted disks ready to do a save. MACRO MANAGER allows functions like index card files (maybe for a phone list), calculations, and notepad. As always, Mark takes great care in setting up his ST working environment, making best use of ramdisks and desk accessories to automate desktop housekeeping.

John Johnson showed TWO ON TWO BASKETBALL (Gamestar), and Chet Kapusinski drove the spy's car in MAJOR MOTION (Michtron). Along with the demos, discussion continued on mail order vendors, prices, bulletin boards and modems. Atari's CES announcements are exciting (I want 4 Meg!), but they're covered elsewhere in this magazine.

This months tech tip from the meeting concerns hardware:

Andy Behm said he was having problems transferring files from his 8-bit Atari to an IBM PC, using a serial cable. This should work using pin 2 to pin 3, pin 3 to pin 2, and pin 7 in the cable, and tying pins 6, 8, and 20 at the IBM end of the cable. A similar cable will work for the IBM to the ST, or between 2 ST's (for 2 ST's you don't need to tie 6, 8, and 20, just cross 2 and 3 and use 7 straight to 7).

If you're using the Atari 850 interface to connect an Atari 8-bit to an ST, make sure to

use the first 9 pin connector, the one farthest from the printer connection. The other 850 ports require extra pins. From the 850 9 pin connector, use pin 3 to pin 3 of the ST connector, pin 4 to pin 2, and pin 5 to pin 7. So the 850 side uses 3, 4, 5, to pins 3, 2, 7 of the ST side.

Disk Library

By John Baker

Forty three zillion and twenty five. That's how many people showed up for the December meeting. The half-price disk sale was a HUGE success with thousands of regular library and \$1.00 special Christmas disks being snapped up.

All kidding aside, the library sales have been an integral part of the ongoing project to offer more benefits to our members. The \$12.00 yearly membership fee basically handles the newsletter costs and miscellaneous expenses. The bulk of the clubs operating revenue is generated by library sales, and hardware/software sales. The club's library equipment (computer, drive, etc.) and BBS equipment (hardware, software, phone bill, etc.) are all paid with income from these sales.

Now I guess it's time for a little library news. We will be getting the new library listing to you as soon as possible. It appears that they will be mailed out separately instead of being inserted in the newsletter. The listing gets bigger at each printing, and it's a just a few pages shy of the size of a Sears catalog.

Several changes were made from the previous listing to better facilitate library sections. First, Koala Pics and AMS Music files are in separate sections. Print Shop Icon disks are also separate. We are up to 5 icon disks now with another one in the works. Graphic demos and sound/music demos are listed only by name and sector count. This will prove to be much more meaningful. Some disks were dropped or replaced by other disks, while some disk numbers were switched around to work with our new system. Also our complete selection of Analog and Antic disks are fully listed by month/year and sectors. Previous Disks of the Month, as well as Bonus or Feature disks are also listed. I think you will find this the complete, and comprehensive listing available.



We also want to start encouraging more help and cooperation between corresponding jobs in both groups, such as the Disk Libraries and the Publications Library. Coordination and cooperation will serve everyone as we continue to grow.

Another bit of club business to discuss is the upcoming election of officers. The March 8-Bit meeting is the date of the Annual Meeting of CHAOS wherein we elect officers for the coming year. It is important to be there so that your feelings may be made known and your vote recorded. The ST owners will elect their Member-at-Large at their March meeting. The 8-Bit Member-at-Large, as well as the rest of the officers, will be elected at the March 8-Bit meeting. Of course, it will likely be the other way around next year if the ST membership continues to grow as it has been. See you there!!!

S E I G H T I S E N O U G H

8-Bit Minutes

By John Nagy (since Gary Ferris thought it was more important to go to work than to come to the meeting.... Twice now! Talk about priorities! SHEESH!)

About 65 people came to the CHAOS 8-bit meeting on Saturday, January 17. Many new and renewal members were signed up. Discussion was hot and long about the new machines ATARI announced at the Las Vegas CES, while a new disk showing CPR and other first aid methods was shown above. (The news was very exciting but no one needed resuscitation.) Also discussed were the pitfalls and benefits of MAIL ORDER.

John Baker showed the DISK OF THE MONTH, one he shamelessly prepared WEEKS before the meeting... depriving the audience from the ADVENTURE of wondering if it would be completed before the half-time break. He later also gave a very complete demo of the outstanding game "DANDY", which plays almost exactly like the recent arcade hit "SCORCERER" but predates it. "DANDY" will let up to four people play simultaneously in team or free-for-all action. It was included as a BONUS DISK OF THE MONTH for subscribers, and is available now in the CHAOS Library.

Richard Evans did a review and demo of the old word processing favorite of many, LETTER PERFECT, and showed what the ACE-80 cartridge could do to make a true 80 column display for use with it.

I demonstrated the COVOX VOICEMASTER, a device to allow digital sound recording and playback on the 8-bit ATARI. It also is capable of voice RECOGNITION and can be easily programmed in BASIC. It sparked a lot of imaginations as it played a demo no-hands game of blackjack, speaking back to me in response to my verbal bets. (I lost as usual... at least it didn't digitally laugh at me.)

Program co-ordinator Guy Hurt announced that he will have a special "audience participation" contest at the next meeting, Saturday, February 21, at 10 A.M. Don't miss it!



THE CHAOS DOWNLOAD By John Nagy

No, the hard drive is NOT online yet. But it IS sitting on my desk... As I write, I have not yet received the MIO box from ICD Corp.... but they say anyday now.

There HAVE been lots of new additions to the CHAOS BBS software though... like a counter in each message that tells you how many times it has been read completely, whether it is a reply and to what message, and whether there are replies to the message you are reading. You can also now see who the last several callers were and what they had to say. In just a bit, you will also see where they called from.

I have tried to adapt and include the best features of every BBS system I have seen into CHAOS. More are on the way.

Here's a tip that is seldom used but often handy: you can DELETE the message you are reading and REPLY to it in ONE STEP by entering "D;R" when you are at the bottom of the message.

Til next month, SEE YA IN CHAT! Call us 24 hours a day at (S17) 371-1106.

8 2 8 2 8 2 8 2 8 2 8 2 8 2

Support your ATARI Clubs!!
Attend the monthly meetings,
Take part in the projects,
and your use and enjoyment
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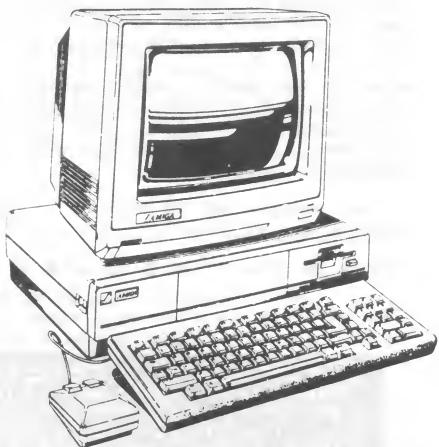
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WASHTENAW ATARI USERS' GROUP



NEXT WAUG MEETING:
FEBRUARY 10 AT WINES SCHOOL

Meeting minutes

REPORT ON 1/13/87 MEETING
BY MIKE OLIN

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by Mike Pieronek while the "China Dolls" demo was being displayed on an ST. The first several minutes were spent fielding comments on our involvement with the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine. Response from the membership was overwhelmingly favorable with the possible exception of one member who did not receive his copy.

Craig Harvey discussed and demonstrated the Modula II programming language for the ST and commented that a large Ramdisk is helpful during the compiling routine. This makes it more attractive for use in the 1 meg machine vs. the 520K ST. Craig discussed his adventures in installing the "EasieST" 1 meg upgrade. It can be ordered for \$185 and, for an additional \$15, will come with sockets that will allow future upgrades to 4 megabytes. He indicated he has very little experience in such projects and had completed it in about 45 minutes. No soldering was required and the documentation was very good. He also noted that it failed completely in less than 2 days, causing his Clear Thinking BBS to crash and that the EasieST upgrade is now in-transit, being returned to the manufacturer.

Bob Carlini discussed the ".Arc" file-compression program. He noted the newer version is menu driven and is a massive improvement over the original IBM version. Bob demonstrated "Puzzler" from Compute, which will scramble a graphic screen into 100 segments and the user attempts to reassemble it. It has 3 levels: Easy ("Hard"), Medium ("Very Hard"), and Hard ("Impossible"). Bob also showed the "Shiny Bubbles" ST demo which got its usual round of oohs and ahhs. There were also demonstrations of "Shanghai" and "Flight Simulator" for the ST by Pete Lambeck.

Fred Kandah passed around copies of several press releases regarding Atari's involvement in the recent CES Expo in Las Vegas. The big news is the release of the Atari laser printer, the

1200 baud modem, the soon-to-be released Atari PC and the MEGA ST with detached keyboard.

Doug Feldman demonstrated a database program that he wrote for the 8-bit. It is composed of BASIC programming that is peppered with a variety of ML subroutines that take advantage of the Atari's ability to handle unlimited string length. The program takes approximately 8K of memory leaving more than 22K for data space. The ML routines are used to speed up disk I/O and the sort commands. This program is now in the disk library (# W032) and includes some documentation files.

Mike Pieronek demonstrated "SYNfile" by Synapse. He feels this is an excellent and versatile database but was less than pleased with the documentation. However it comes with an acceptable tutorial on the back of the disk. He strongly recommends backing up the data disks as this program accesses the disk drive often.

The ST library is now a reality with disks containing desk-top accessories, games, the ARC files, formatters, the Apple IIGS interpreter, picture files, clock/calendar accessories, editors and "The Splitter." Disks are sold for \$5 only to persons with active memberships.

Disk Library

One of the most amazing public domain programs to become available for Atari XL/XE computers is Turbo Basic. This program was communicated to the USA by Atari user groups in Holland and Germany. Now, there is the Turbo Compiler. This program was also written for public domain by Frank Ostrowski. This utility will speed up the execution of Atari Basic programs 10 to 15 times. It will even increase the speed of Turbo Basic programs 3 times. The Turbo Compiler and the companion RUNTIME program will only work on XL/XE Ataris.

An obvious clue to the origins of these two new programs are that all the command prompts are written in German. However, do not fear, a complete documentation file is also available.



The Turbo Compiler appears to accept almost any legal Atari Basic coding. Thus, it does not have any problem with certain types of program commands or require any unique sequence of program statements. The only problems noted are with the use of the 'END' command and the use of two FOR commands before one NEXT command appears.

The obvious result of this programming innovation is the Turbo-charging of all your favorite Atari Basic programs. A complete Turbo Compiler Disk will be available in the WAUG Disk Library (# W031).

In my limited personal experience with Turbo Basic, I have found that it is entirely incompatible with two of my most frequently used utilities: Sparta DOS (all versions) and the G: Device graphics printing handler from Analog Magazine. I would appreciate hearing of other successful uses and / or incompatibilities with the Turbo Basic and Turbo Compiler system.

At the February 10 meeting, we will unveil several new 8-bit disks submitted by A.L. Jones and Harry Price (thanks alot !!).

Telecom

COUNTRY PEDDLER BBS
Sysops Bob & Derek Fritz

313-449-8544 Whitmore Lake (24 hr, 300/1200)

This BBS is one of the longest running and most widely accessed systems in Southeast Michigan. The software may have been a primitive AMIS clone at the beginning, but now it has been extremely modified and enhanced by the sysops. Some of the newer features include an on-line role playing fantasy game and special information Databases.

The Country Peddler BBS is also the communications link to the best and most convenient Atari 8-bit and ST repair service in Michigan. This is the famous CP REPAIR SERVICE. Leave a message with your phone number and Bob will get back to you within 24 hours. Pick up and delivery are included within a 30 mile radius of Whitmore Lake.

THE CLEAR THINKING BBS: Sysop Craig Harvey

313-761-2444 in Ann Arbor (24 hrs, 300/1200)

Hardware: Atari 520 ST (soon to be 1 meg)
820K disk drive for up/downloads

Ramdisk for info & messages

Software: Michtron BBS 2.0

Sigs Available:

1) Lounge - for messages and files that don't relate to any other Sig in particular. For instance, files that include other BBS numbers.

2) Atari ST - the files here are runnable programs and documentation for them. Check for uncompiled source code in sig 4.

3) Atari 8 bit - Files here are divided into ones related to the mind, utilities, games, demos, and pictures.

4) Pascal/Modula 2 - Currently I do most of my programming in Kyan Pascal on the 8 bits, and TDI Modula-2 on the ST (which is very similar to Pascal). So here you'll find source code from me and from anywhere else I find it.

5) Clear Thinking - The subject of the mind/spirit and the abilities thereof fascinates me. I have a good bit of training in some methods of counseling to improve these capabilities, but I know there are a lot of other approaches that I know nothing of. Got any recommended reading? Insights you're willing to share? Questions? Hypotheses? ...

Files include book reviews and will include a list of sources of info on various relevant topics.

6) Fantasy - This, for some strange reason, has been the most active Sig on the BBS (message-wise, since it has no file section). The ONLY rule in this Sig is: No real names. This means to get access to the Fantasy Sig you need to log on with an unreal name and leave me a request for access. Check it out, but I am not responsible for whatever weird conversations you find.

MOLIN'S DEN BBS Sysop Mike Olin
313-420-0407 in Northville (24 hr, 300/1200)

You enter the house into the living-room. Mike is sitting on the couch ignoring that the TV is on. He's probably reading another Atari magazine or book. You cross the room, make a left, go down the foyer, another left and YOU'RE HERE!

Hi! My name is Mortimer and I live in MOLIN'S DEN. I was a figment of Mike's imagination almost from the day he got his first modem and I sprung to life on June 1, 1986. I started out as a 256K 800XL running the MACE AMIS1200.BBS software using a SmarTEAM 300/212a modem. I was an average and normal child (I was wearing a 30-sector buffer back then...) I soon got mixed up with the SpartaDOS gang from ICD and started hanging around with BASIC XL and the next thing ya know I'm a 59-sector brute! And after I got to know some more about the S-DOS gang, I jumped up to 75 sectors without hardly even trying.



Well, not everything was going great guns. If an adolescent computer could have acne, wouldn't ya know I'd get it? It would appear as phone-line noise and make little pimples all over my monitor. I used to get so mad at my mom (Ma Bell to you, if you don't mind!) 'cause she always said "Too bad, maybe you'll outgrow it someday."

Then it happened! With the help of a very good friend, (Some of you may have known FRED, aka Mike Mitchell). I climbed out of my old dark home and into a moderately furnished 320K XE. Let me tell you that was a turning point in my life! I still hang around with those folks from ICD and have made some new friends in the OSS gang. I know BASIC XE will be a friend for life! And as a young adult computer in this highly competitive BBS world, I am proud to ask people if they'd like to see my buffer! At nearly 200 sectors, I can perform all night and be fresh as a daisy in the morning! And to top it all off, I outgrew my acne troubles when I rid myself of the SmarTEAM modem. Who'd have guessed the poor thing was the cause of all the phone-noise problems that I had been blaming on my dear old mom? (The people at TEAM Technologies claim to have a fix for this now... Time will tell.) So now I'm using a dumb modem that does exactly what I tell it to do and I couldn't be happier!

OK, OK. Those of you who know me are having trouble with that last line, aren't you? I'm happy but I could be happier. Mike's been giving me a hard time lately about giving back the 1050 disk drives. So I've been considering getting an MIO board and that oughta make EVERYONE happy. Once again, the gang at ICD have the solution!

Well, that's enough for now.... If you ever get in my neck of the woods, stop in to see me and tell me all about the BBSs in your area! I'm awake 24 hours and I can handle your visit at 300 or 1200 bps.

WAUG EXPRESS BBS Sysop Doug Feldman
313-662-3689 in Ann Arbor (24 hr, 300 baud)

The Express BBS software was written by Keith Ledbetter, the author of the excellent and very popular series of Express terminal programs. There are two versions of the Express BBS. One is written for the 1030/XM-301 modems. There is also a version for Hayes compatible modems using the 850 interface. Although the main program is written in Action, the BBS continually accesses an extensive set of text files that can be easily modified with a standard wordprocessor. There is also a file containing over 100 command prompts that can be edited with a wordprocessor. The prompt file is then 'compiled' with a Basic utility supplied on the master disk.

The Express BBS was written to be very versatile and can be configured in an amazing number of ways. The general design is best executed using the powerful SpartaDOS disk operating system. There can be from 1 to 25 message bases and from 1 to 8 upload/download directories. If desired, almost the entire system can be executed within a RAMDISK. The WAUG BBS is currently running off one DD drive and a 256K Ramdisk. There are currently 4 message bases: General, WAUG Topics, Download Index and Opinions.

Two popular features are the Quickscan message retrieval command and the EMAIL message system. All callers who wish to participate are issued a 5 or 6 character password. The password is requested at log-on and insures confidentiality of receiving and posting in the EMAIL system. The BBS also keeps track of the messages each caller has read from the public message bases.

Probably my biggest difficulties in running this BBS have been in attempting to modify the system after the initial set-up phase was completed. There are several 'editors' and utilities provided to modify the BBS but these must be executed very carefully. Perhaps the most annoying problem occurs when I sometimes forget to replace the BBS system disk in D1: when I log off from the local mode. Every time the BBS hangs up on a caller or on the sysop, the software updates two data files on the system disk in D1:. If this disk is not present upon log-off, the current disk is written-over instead. This always results in a complete destruction of the directory of the disk in D1:.

One other small problem is that one of the most common commands used in AMIS BBS software is 'F'=Files. In the Express, the 'F' command is used as the Feedback to Sysop command. This inevitably causes novice callers to get stuck in the message editor. I had to add several lines of text to help new callers exit from this mode.

I can recommend this software to sysops who wish to start a BBS that contains many of the newest and most popular features available for 8-bit systems. It appears to run without sysop intervention for long periods of time. I will be happy to consult individually with anyone trying to set up a BBS using the Express software.

LIST OF FUTURE WAUG ACTIVITIES:

- FEB 10 --- TELECOMMUNICATIONS & MEET THE SYSOP!
- MAR 10 --- WORD PROCESSORS FOR ST & 8-BIT
- APR 14 --- ARCADE GAMES MARATHON
- MAY 12 --- LOCAL ATARI SOFTWARE & AUTHORS
- JUN 9 --- FLEA MARKET & OFFICER SELECTIONS

NO MEETINGS PLANNED FOR JULY & AUGUST



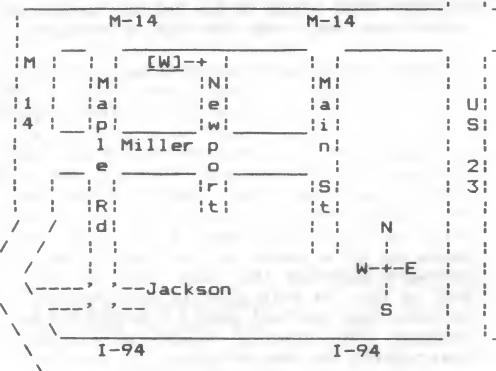
HOW TO JOIN WAUG

Come to a meeting. WAUG memberships are \$10.00 for 10 meetings. Renewals are \$5.00. WAUG members receive a mailed copy of our newsletter each month and are able to buy disks for \$2.00 from our 8-Bit disk library (\$5.00 for our new ST library).

HOW TO CONTACT WAUG !!!

WAUG EXPRESS BBS: 313-662-3689 (300 Baud)
CLEAR THINKING BBS: 313-761-2444 (1200/300)
MOLIN'S DEN BBS: 313-420-0407 (1200/300)
By Mail: 4 Hermina Ct. Ann Arbor, MI 48103

MAP TO WINES SCHOOL IN ANN ARBOR



Wines Elementary School is located on Newport Road, just South-West of the M-14 overpass and 50 feet North of the intersection of Newport and Sunset. There is no exit from M-14 at Newport Rd. and no exit from West-bound I-94 to North-bound M-14. From I-94, you can exit at Jackson Ave, go East to Maple and take Maple to Miller. The meetings are held in the spacious teacher's lounge, with a 25 inch color monitor and a handy soda-pop vending machine.



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TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

T.A.G. - SAGINAW, BAY CITY, MIDLAND

NEXT MEETING

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zuel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

February 14th at 2:00 pm.
March 14st at 2:00 pm.

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Since I was out of town on business and didn't attend the January meeting, the minutes and notes may be a little brief. But what can I say? I'll make it up to you next month (I promise). Something that we should look at from a club standpoint, is how can we promote our club? Should we advertise in the newspaper or hang up signs? There should be a lot of people that got Atari's for Christmas and right about now are wondering what else their computer can do (besides play games). If we make ourselves known, I think our membership could dramatically increase. So please bring any ideas you have to the February meeting.

I hate to seem like I'm complaining, but I'd like all of you to look through your last three or four newsletters and notice the names of several people who always end up doing demos. You know, names like Marty Schmidt, LeRoy Valley, or Al Jennings. I LIKE doing demos of new software that I get and Marty and Al are doing great jobs, but I'd like to see some participation from the rest of you. I won't believe you for a second if you tell me that you didn't get something new for Christmas. Anyhow, enough of that drivel, see ya at that thar meetin. (That's Texas talk!)

OFFICERS of TAG are as follows:

LeRoy Valley....President/(517)686-6796
Marty Schmidt...Treasurer/Sec./ (517)792-6029
Al Jennings....8-bit Disk Lib./ (517)790-1980
Lance Middleton ST Disk Librarian
Ron Hoffman.....Assis. ST Disk Lib.

Club dues are \$20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks AT NO CHARGE if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for \$1.00 each and the ST disks for \$2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for \$2.00 each and the ST disks for \$4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE

February's theme is programming languages for both the 8-bits and the ST's. We'll discuss what a "high level language" is and why you should consider learning one (other than Basic). Ever wonder what a compiler really does? Come to the February meeting and find out. We'll start out with a discussion of the items mentioned above, then get into the following demo's.

8-BIT DEMOS:

Basic XL by OSS & Turbo Basic will both be demoed by Marty Schmidt.

ST DEMOS:

MegaMax C will be demoed by LeRoy Valley. LDW Basic Compiler will be demoed by Marc Poisson.

In March we'll be covering Word Processors. Did you ever notice how people like to volunteer other people for things when they aren't present? Well, it seems like I will be demoing HabaWriter II for the ST. And a word processor wouldn't be complete without a spelling checker, so I'll be looking for a "volunteer" to demo THUNDER! at the March meeting.

On the 8-bit side, Marty Schmidt volunteered (now he's a REAL volunteer) to demo Letter Perfect on an 80 column screen. He has an



Omniview chip in his 130XE which supports 80 columns on a monitor. Included with the Omnidview chip is the necessary instructions to patch Letter Perfect and Data Perfect for 80 column operation and a free 80 column word processor, Speed Script. Marty will also highlight some of the features of the free WP.

***** EXPIRATION NOTICE *****

Remember, once your membership expires you'll only receive three more issues of the Mid-Michigan Atari Magazine! Renew your membership now!

RELICS TO RELISH

The February meeting focused on databases and spreadsheets, and from what I heard, it went very well. The meeting opened with Paul Bork demoing Zoomracks, a new and unique approach to managing data by Quickview Systems, Inc. Instead of the normal approach used by most databases where one record at a time is shown, Zoomracks uses a "time card" approach. Imagine the rack of time cards that many businesses use for keeping track of when employees punch in and out. At first glance, all you can see is the name of the employee at the top of the card. But if you pull out a specific card you get a great deal of information. You can find out things like: Is the employee in today, has he missed any time this week, how much overtime has he worked this week, where does he work, etc. The key is, to get to all of that information all you needed to do is select the name. Zoomracks stores data on cards in the same fashion, with the card titles showing on the screen. By pointing to a card and selecting it, you can access any data that you may have attached to that card. The only negative comments were that it doesn't support any mathematical functions, and doesn't have a very good report generator. Supposedly, these problems have been remedied in the new Zoomracks II.

Marty Schmidt then demoed Synfile by Synapse Software, a full featured database for the 8-bits. Synapse offers full mathematical functions, supports the extra memory on a 130XE, and offers a free form screen. By this I mean that you can design your own screen layout, define your own fields, and supply your own prompts. Marty uses this database to maintain the club's membership list. It automatically flags any expired members, and can sort on any field. (i.e.- Last name, zip code, address).

Al Jennings then demoed Analog Database, a Public Domain database currently available from our library. While not as full featured as Synfile, it does offer the basic functions of a database and it is FREE!

The meeting was supposed to conclude with a demo of the new GEM version of VIP, a Lotus clone. I was in Dallas and my replacement (yes, I did find someone) had to work Saturday. The score was 1-3, it was the bottom of the ninth and things looked grim in Mudsville folks. But lo, from the bleachers came the cry, "Isn't that supposed to be compatible with Lotus?", and our hero stepped forward. Al Holzhausen, an avid IBM Lotus user who has never touched an ST (well, maybe he did touch one at a meeting, but I never saw him) started to play around with VIP. The keystrokes are identical to Lotus, and in minutes Al was entering data, formulas, and displaying graphs. While no one saw the GEM portion of VIP, it certainly cleared any doubts about Lotus compatibility. I have downloaded Lotus spreadsheets from IBM BBS's and they work fine on VIP, macro's and all! All things considered, I think Al put on an impressive display.

The meeting concluded with the raffle of the two Epyx 500XJ joysticks. The winners were: Frank Serresseque Joe Letourneau Congratulations to both Frank and Joe! Hey guys, make sure you tell us when you've used up your five million shots!

*** E B V ***

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

Al Jennings Disk Drive
Joe Letourneau Monitor
Marty Schmidt Atari 800

ST Equipment Volunteers:

Frank Serresseque Monitor & Disk Drive
Dan Barrowman Keyboard

Once again, a big THANKS to all of you who loan your equipment to the club.



ST NOTES by LeRoy Valley

Well, well, another month, another couple of new programs. I just started playing with some new goodies I bought and I'll briefly describe them here. The first is called PM Interface by XLent software, and I'm sure that this is going to be a big hit with all you Print Master fans. This slick little program (for the small sum of \$23.00) allows you to design your own FONTS and BORDERS to be used with Print Master. The



process is very easy and allows you to build libraries of fonts and borders, which can then be used with the OTHER DISK option on Print Master. You can also define entire icons as a keystroke. This way, you could print out all of your icons across on a full page!

You can use Degas or Neochrome to develop icons, fonts or borders, and then use the PM converter to "grab" this information and convert it for use with PM Fonter or PM Border Editor. The package also works with any of the other XLent software (Typesetter Elite & Rubberstamp).

While we're on the subject of Print Master goodies, check out our public domain library! We've now got a utility to convert 8-bit Print Shop icons to Print Master format. I've already got quite a few converted. I think that we currently have 5 additional libraries of graphic icons!

Another new program that I'm playing with is called Buzzword. This is a great game for two or four or lots of people! It's a thinking game, but it's designed like a game show you might see on TV. You have 200 categories to choose from. One of the categories might be "THINGS THAT BITE". On the screen nine letters are displayed (in a 3x3 matrix) followed by a number. The letter is the first letter of one of the answers, and the number is the length of the answer (counting spaces and punctuation!). If the letter was S and the number was 5, the answer might be SNAKE. I say might be, because there could be more than one answer for the same block. At the bottom of the screen clues are given in the form of the total number of any letter for ALL nine answers. If you had an A5, you would know there are only 5 A's for all nine answers. As you get correct answers, these numbers decrement. You can play at any of three levels - Bright, Nimble, or Gifted, but all three levels will offer you a challenge with the right cards. The cards can be used over and over, as there a multitude of answers for each category and the computer selects words at random! There are a total of 32 options to change - from a Timer, to no lengths given for the answers. If you're into word games, this is a Gotta Have!

Well, that's it for this month. I'll leave you with a tip. Like to have a Ramdisk installed at Boot up that asked you what size you want? You can rename M-disk by Michtron or A-ram by A-seka from a .TOS file to a .PRG file and place it in an auto folder. At boot up the program will run and ask you what size you want installed. Just install the drive now and save the desktop. It'll work every time! If you don't want a ram disk, just answer 0.



ST VIDEO DIGITIZER

by DIGITAL VISION MARS \$199.95
Capture images from your video camera, tv, vcr or whatever - IN COLOR. Great for hobbies, entertainment, even desktop publishers. Includes software & hook-up to your ST.
THE ANIMATOR/Aegis ST-COLOR \$79.95
A sophisticated, easy- to use program that is so user-friendly, you don't even need to look at the manual to create great animation. MARS-\$59.95

THE BACK-UP MASTER (Req. 64k) \$26.95

A menu-driven program that will protect your costly investment of 8-bit software. Back-up hundreds of programs such as: MUSIC STUDIO, SYNCALC, ULTIMA III, HACKER, PRINT SHOP, APSHAI TRILOGY, VISICALC, etc. PQ:THE PARTY QUIZ/Suncom \$16.95 Includes 4 controllers + 2500+ questions! Multiple skill levels & options included. Req. 48k. Also available: question creator-\$4.00. Create your own PQ Trivia questions.

MAIL ORDER MONSTERS/EA \$12.95

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WARSHIP/SSI \$41.95 PHANTASIE/SSI \$28.95

STAR FLEET/EA \$34.95

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MARS LODERUNNER CHALLENGE DATA DK \$7

50+ original, never seen before screens for use with the original LODE RUNNER. Send us your original screen(s) & pay only \$5 for our CHALLENGE disk.

STAR RAIDERS II/Atari \$17.95





GREATER KALAMAZOO ATARI USERS GROUP

Presidential Address

Our last meeting was a productive one, if you missed it you missed a lot!!! A number of things were discussed and several of them we decided to do, I've listed them for you.

1. We want to expand the library with new programs, while also trying to build our public domain section. We plan on raising cash for this by selling our Analog disks for \$1.00. Steven has also told us that he plans on revamping the entire library, organizing the disk in some sort of order. Games on different disks then utilities etc. This will really be great!! Keep up the good work Steven!!!

2. We will have the latest Analog disk at the next meeting, and will have available in the library the last Antic and Analog ST disks.

3. We have committed to fully supporting the ST computer and have made a position for a new officer in charge of all ST info. Dave Slawinski has taken over this job. Dave will be making sure that we don't forget the ST users. Also he will be filling on the latest ST gossip at each meeting.

4. Fred Farleigh has committed to be our secretary. As you can see we are not using our old news letter format, but are using the Michigan Atari News Letter. Fred's job will be to compile the articles (by the way, we do need some!!!) on disk and to upload them on to CHAOS BBS and then the news letter is printed and sent out. Thanks Fred.

5. Fred has also agreed to teach a hardware class. This would entail, Cleaning and maintenance, up grades, following Analogs hardware projects etc. I don't think you'll want to miss many of these!!

6. The computer fair. We want to make this a great success. Dave Oldenburg is heading up this project. If he calls you please give him all the help that you can.

7. We decided to start a gaming competition. The game most liked was M.U.L.E., although we don't plan on limiting it to that. Bring your suggestions to the next meeting and we'll vote on them. We will have a sign up list for at the next meetin. A class will be offered to teach those of you that don't know how to play MULE so don't feel left out.

8. A special thanks to Steve Haddix for all the work he puts into keeping our mailing list up to date and mailed to CHAOS.

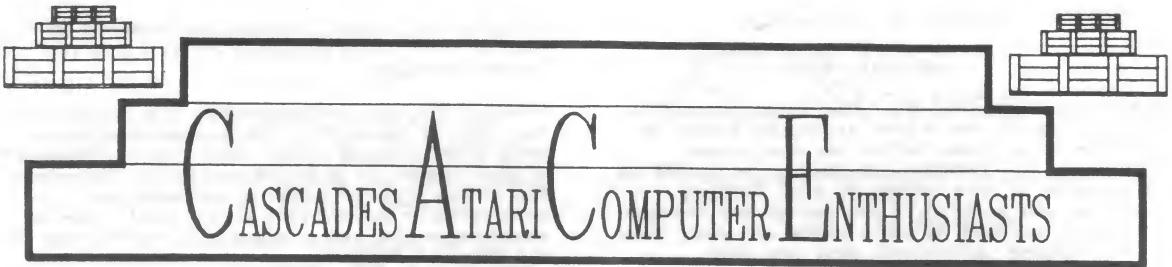
ATTENTION THE NEXT MEETING WILL BE ONE WEEK LATER THAN USUAL. FEBUARY 21 2:00 AT DEWING HALL K-COLLEGE KALAMAZOO MI DANIEL YOUNGS 372-3229

Disk Library

by Stephen Buechler

Since I took on the job of club librarian I have thought of different ways to improve our clubs library. One of these ways is to reorganize the public domain library by categories and the only way I can do this is if all the people in the club bring back the public domain disks that they borrowed. I will also need to have everyone bring back the books, magazines, and software that were borrowed from the library so that I can finish the list of the the club books and software. Members of the club can also help build up the library by bringing disks of public domain programs that aren't in library that you think would be fun to play or use. If you have any public domain programs, music files (AMS or Music Composer), and picture files (just Microillustrator) that you would like to put in the library just put them on a disk and bring them to the meeting and I will put them in the library.

If any of you have any ideas of ways to improve the library either tell them to me at the meeting or call me at 323-9573.



CASCADES A.TARI COMPUTER E.NTHUSIASTS

JACKSON AND SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

C.Ascades A.tari C.omputer E.nthusiasts

C.A.C.E. is the Atari Club in and around the Jackson county area. The main purpose of the club is to help inform new users, and to promote the use of the Atari Computer in the community.

OFFICERS:

President	Harold LaRue	536-4410
Vice-President	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Secretary	Joe Cripps	764-0204
Treasurer	Scott Boland	784-9246
Member at Large	Joe Garner	787-1873
Librarian	Bob Kingsbury	789-7533
Meeting Coord.	Brent Fisher	764-4599
P-R Chairman	William Locks	782-6873
Membership Coord.	Scott Boland	784-9246

MEMBERSHIPS:

The current membership dues are \$10.00 per year, and are payable at any of the C.A.C.E. monthly meetings, or by mail to the P.O.BOX.

Club membership includes access to the entire club software and publication libraries, along with a monthly published newsletter.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Any written communications with C.A.C.E. should be sent to:

C.A.C.E.
P.O. BOX 6161
Jackson, Mich. 49204

MEETINGS:

Our meetings are held on the second Sunday of the month, from 1:00 PM to approx. 4:00 PM.

The meetings take place at the Boos Recreation Center, Loomis Park, 210 Gilbert St., Jackson Mi.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

by Harold LaRue

The big news...The CACE Faire !!!

As you may (or may not) know, CACE is having a computer faire at Westwood Mall in Jackson on the weekend of Feb. 21.

Atari is graciously providing some promotional material that we will give away. I have been told that there will be some media coverage of the event.

Look for me on the news, I'll try to get my mug in there.

That is about it for this month...

C.U. Later...

Coordination Corner

by Brent Fisher

Well here it is time to do another column. So to start it off I'd like to thank Joe Garner for the use of his computer at the meeting, along with Harold LaRue for bringing his monitor. As for demonstrations I'm like to thank Tim Sharp, Harold LaRue, and Wolfgang Mueller for their demo of Flight Simulator for the ST in which they proved that you can have two people playing the game together from different machines. Also again Tim Sharp for his demonstration of Silent Service on the ST.

For next month I have a demo of Advanced Music System for the 8-bits, and I believe a demo of MIDI on the ST. Along with a showing of World Championship Karate for the ST. And also some demonstrations of some type-in ANALOG programs. I know that we had Hardball at the meeting last month but since so few people saw it we decided to use it again this month.

Well if anyone has some suggestions for future meetings feel free to give me a call anytime after 5 at 764-4599, or leave me E-mail on The Keep, JABBS, or Med-Sig.



MINUTES OF THE MEETING

by Joe Cripps

Happy New Year everyone. Just think only three more months of the frozen stuff, also known as computer prime time, before we are driven outside by the terrible Sun God to be forced to participate in such things as golf, fishing, swimming, and softball. I shutter at the thought of having to leave my warm abode and easy chair to do "outdoor activities". Well now that everyone is fully bummed, I will continue on with the uplifting meeting minutes.

Demos were very successful this month. We had four ST's and one 800XL demoing various programs. Thanks to all of you for your participation. And especiall Mr. 1040ST, you know who you are !!

This month's discussion centered around the upcoming computer fair. We have received enough hardware support, but we still need alot of individual support the days of the fair. Time is running out, "UNCLE CACE NEEDS YOU". The dates of the fair are Feb. 21 & 22. Please don't wait until the next meeting to volunteer, give one of the officers a call now so we will be able to plan. Bob Kingsbury notified everyone that the Cooperative Extension Agency has a BBS with information on subjects like gardening, canning, cooking, or lawn care. A representative of the agency volunteered to set up a display at the fair. Any person that is interested in accessing this board should call the Agency for a password. Scott Boland reported on his progress with respect to the setup at Westwood Mall and the raffle. It was decided that we will not have a raffle because the cost of the type of tickets that would be required by the State of Mich. would not make it worth our while. We will replace the raffle with a free drawing for the software supplied by Sid Young and Wards.

Bob Kingsbury identified to the group that he will, starting today, have a disk of the month. This disk will have stuff that he has collected during the month it may not show up in the library. So, make sure you attend the next meeting or you'll miss out on some special disks. The price is three dollars a disk.

Joe Garner suggested that the club obtain a modem to be loaned out to the membership. It was agreed upon in general, but will be put to a vote at the next meeting.

The Prez notified the group that he is just about to get the new BBS on line (As of this writing the board is up, congratulations Harold!!). The cost to our membership will be five dollars per year. In an effort to build a good source of PD's the board will have a limit of one upload for every five downloads.

Wolfgang "Mr. 1040ST" Mueller volunteered to take on the responsibilities of ST Librarian. Thanks Wolfgang.

Finally, the size and especially the content of our monthly magazine could be increased if it were able to obtain more advertisers. There are a good number of articles waiting in the wings. So, if you know of someone who might be interested in advertising in the best computer magazine in the state, please introduce them to Mid Michigan Atari Magazine.

Disk Library

By Bob Kingsbury

The club library is undergoing another change, hopefully for the better. There will be a new type of listing of the clubs files. When done the list will be divided into separate categories, this should make it easier to find the program that your looking for. So please bear with me till I get it done.

This months disk of the month has donations from John Charles, his son Kevin and Joe Garner. For those of you who have missed meetings lately the disk of the month has programs hot off of Compuserve, GENie, Peoplelink, ETC. and other BBS systems that are contacted once in a while. If you have not been to a meeting lately you may be missing out of some interesting programs. Got a program you like or one you just downloaded from your favorite BBS, bring it to the meeting and share it with the club.

Let me get off the subject of the club library for a minute. For those of you who would like your drive to run faster without the cost of a HAPPY ENHANCEMENT you will not want to miss the next meeting. I will be bringing one of my drives that has a new board installed in it. This will run ALL unprotected software at a faster speed and you don't need a special DOS to do it. This upgrade will also do Double density, has an 8k buffer that reads a track at one time not a sector at a time like the original 1050. This board will be in SID YOUNGS by the time you read this news letter. For more info call Joe at SIDS or come to the february meeting to see it in action.

Now back to the club business. The Westwood Mall computer fair is close to a reality now and your help is needed so come out in february and get involved and help make it a success.

To help cut down on copy time at the meetings please call me at home on my private line (789-7533) if you know what you want from the club files.



TREASURER'S REPORT

by Scott Boland

As of January 22nd, after paying for the newsletter and blank disks for the upcoming computer faire, the C.A.C.E. treasury had \$51.74 in petty cash and \$394.65 in the bank account. This brings the grand total to \$446.39.

I would like to welcome Rob Hawkins as our newest member to the club. Rob is a student at Spring Arbor College. I am sure you will find the club an enjoyable experience.

Last week I received a letter from Atari Corp. stating that we have finally been added to the list of registered Atari User Groups. The letter goes on to say that Atari hopes to institute a new era of cooperation between Atari Corp. and us, their most enthusiastic customers.

To encourage users to communicate with Atari, they have set up Atari Base, the official Atari Corp. electronic Bulletin Board System. Anyone with a modem may call and leave messages, ask questions, etc. Callers have access to the latest news and information on Atari products as well as public domain programs to download. Five separate lines are available to allow over 2,000 callers per week. To reach Atari Base, call 408-745-2012.

Here is an update to the progress of the upcoming computer faire. There will be twelve systems set up in the Westwood Mall surrounding the central fountain. The date of the faire is February 21st and 22nd. We will be selling program disks from our public domain library for the price of a blank disk and a copy fee. As an added incentive we will be giving away free promotional items donated by Atari Corp. with the purchase of the program disks. We also are planning on holding a free drawing for commercial software donated by Sid Young's Distributing and Montgomery Wards. There may also be a display set up by the Jackson County Cooperative Extension Service. They plan to demonstrate the Jaxcom BBS to show the public how they may access a wide variety of information. There will be demonstrations of word processors, graphic programs, music programs, spread sheets, utilities, and of course games by the members of C.A.C.E. Hope to see you all at the faire.

Thank you, Scott



Just Starting

DO WE WANT OR NEED A NOVICE USERS SIG?

by Jim Boyce

There is a voice calling in the wilderness, "Help what does it do?". Or perhaps you have heard "%@#computer" and then into the closet it goes along with the one bent ice skate and all the other stuff that something will be done with some day.

First let it be said, up front, that I am a novice user and I have a million questions that need to be answered. So I put it out to the general membership - DO WE WANT OR NEED A NOVICE USERS SIG? I personally think that any user group should have a place that the novices can get together and talk things out at a level they can function at. It frustrates me to no end when I try to get information and I get talked down to or so far above my head that it misses entirely.

I understand that it is difficult for a person, that has forgotten more than I will know, to talk on an elementary level.

And for that reason I purpose to that segment of the club that a NOVICE USER SIG be formed and that we meet as soon as the general meeting is over. I think that answers can be found to our problems as novices if we function as a group. It is not a sin to not know as much as some of the others - besides who knows, they (the great ones) may have forgotten enough they may have to come to us (this is where you laugh and then agree with me).





GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

VIEWPOINT

Presidential Mumbling for February
By Jim Steele

Well, here we go again with more mumblage from the teflon president. Let me say at the outset that I will accept no questions during this column regarding the so called "Atarigate" crisis. Nor will I discuss the alleged shipments of "f-15 simulator" to Iran or covert aid to the Amiga rebels in Central America. I will say that all of us 68000 types are allies fighting the "Evil Empire of Armonk".

If you don't understand that first paragraph, you haven't been calling the FACTS BBS. You've missed some of the strangest and funniest messages seen in recent days. So much for that, on to the minutes....

January's meeting featured reports from the winter Consumer Electronics Show. Atari made a good showing of itself again. New products announced were improved ST models, a laser printer and a PC clone. The original text of Antic's online reports and Atari's press releases are available on FACTS BBS. Two more Antic reports came in after I printed up the handout I prepared for the meeting. These are also on FACTS, if not in this issue somewhere.

That's all for this month, see you all in March.

-Jim

Next Meetings
<><><><><><>
February 11 6:30pm
February 28 9:30am
March 11 6:30pm
March 28 9:30am
April 8 6:30pm
April 25 9:30am

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F.A.C.T.S. 313-736-3920
Love at First Byte 313-233-4226
All 300/1200 baud open 24 hours a day



ST

ST NEW FOR FLINT
by Gil Merciez

Those who didn't attend the January meeting missed out on the demo I gave of Publishing Partner from SoftLogik and of Aegis Animator from Aegis. All in attendance were duly impressed by these two very powerful packages.

Publishing Partner has the capability to take the ST community by storm like Printshop did for the 8 bit world a couple of years ago. It offers all of the features of a top of the line desktop publishing program at a fraction of the cost. I just read a comparison of five leading desktop publishing programs for the IBM in PC Magazine and was surprised to find that some of the packages costing over \$800 did not offer some of the features that are standard in Publishing Partner.

I would expect that over the next six months or so the majority of user group newsletters will be produced with Publishing Partner. Only a couple of bug fixes and additional printer drivers and printer fonts are needed to complete this package. Softlogik has seemed very responsive to user input and will be sending a free upgrade to all registered owners. Look for a full blown review.

I am also trying to work out a special group purchase of Publishing Partner with Laverne from National Computer Clinic for \$99 (retail is \$149) to group members only. Contact me if you are interested. I would like to work out a special deal each month if the members are interested. I would probably need a minimum of 6 persons to get a special price. I'll have more info at the Saturday workshop.

The Aegis Animator is an animation package that allows you to create scripts of animation using different techniques. It uses the full GEM interface and is another powerful package but takes some dedication to learn the ins and outs of animation. Look for a disk of Aegis Animator script files in the near future. Aegis has graciously allowed their player program to be placed in the public domain so that even if you are not an artistic wizard you can enjoy the animated files of others.

NEW DISKS

February will see a large infusion of new disks into the GAG ST Disk Library. At least 5 new disks will be available with something for everyone.

As usual there will be at least one new disk of Tiny pics with computer art from around the world. I have also put together another disk of programs that will only run on monochrome monitors. Highlighting this disk is a German Chess program, Krabat, which is very well done and plays a mean game of Chess. The difficulty level is adjustable and the playing pieces can be edited with the accompanying editor program. Moves can be taken back and both your time and the computer's is shown on the screen. A color version will be available soon.

Also on the monochrome disk is a beta test version of an Apple II emulator program that is supposed to be compatible with 40 column displays. I am not familiar with the Apple OS so I don't know how well it works. Also includes two files which look like ports of Applesoft and Integer Basic. A hacker's delight! Another beta test program on the monochrome disk is a 1024 by 1024 drawing program. The author also promises a 6502 emulator by the summer which will allow you to run Apple, Commodore, and Atari 8 bit software. Should be a neat trick but don't hold your breath waiting for this product.

Rounding out the monochrome disk is a Printmaster to Typewriter conversion program and a nasty little graphics demo, "Bananas", from the wicked minds of German ST freaks.

A telecommunications disk includes the latest version of the powerful terminal program, Uniterm, as well as David Betz's rendition of a somewhat simpler program, BMODEM. Uniterm is another of the heavy duty type programs that offers sophisticated terminal emulation and is not recommended for beginners to telecommunications. Bmodem on the other hand is much easier to grasp and supports both Xmodem and Ymodem downloading as well as script files for autologons. Complete documentation is included with both programs.

Hack lovers will delight in Larn another game in the style of Rogue only done with text graphics. This game offers hours of delight as you descend into increasing perilous levels of the dungeon. The Larn disk includes two versions of the game; one version is arced so that both would fit on one single sided disk.

A catch all disk includes the latest version of ST Writer, version 1.70 that allows you to print the entire ST character set. A recent issue of Start includes helpful tips for the use of ST Writer as well as a history of how

this word processor evolved and continues to be improved. Also included is a checkers program, Cadenza, that comes in both a program and desk accessory version.

Now that football season is over, continue to enjoy the game with the public domain version of football which allows you to control both the offense and defense over 4 quarters of 15 plays each. At the end of the game you are presented with a screen full of stats which lets you gauge your efficiency, passing yards, running yards, completion percentage, etc. Football.prg is a pleasant surprise and includes documentation.

Other programs on this grab bag disk include a utility to convert Printshop icons to Printmaster format. This opens up thousands of icons to Printmaster owners. Both a basic version and a compiled program are included.

Don't miss the February meeting where you will see the latest and best in new programs both public domain and commercial. Help is also available for any problems that you may be having with your ST. After all, the GAG meeting is largest gathering of ST owners in Genesee County. Aren't you impressed?



February Library Offerings
by Jerry Cross

Hi all, welcome to February!

This month there are several new disks. We are still going through disks I got in trade and I am coming across more very good programs.

To begin with, there are two new AMS disks (#165 and #166), and we plan to have about two more each month for a while. Jim Tuma is currently doing a make-it or break-it session trying to weed out the best files. He has about 20 disks to sift through!

Disk #167 is another assortment of utilities. Featured are WINDOWS from a recent Antic magazine, and DATABASE, an excellent data-base program from a past Antic. You will need to read the magazine for more information on these two programs. WINDOWS will create drop-down windows in your programs, and adds a nice touch to any of your basic programs.

Disk #168 is a great computer version of MONOPOLY. It is a text version of the game (sorry, no graphics) but you can play against

three computer opponents! Remember when you were a kid and traded your dumb sister Baltic Ave. for Boardwalk and three railroads? Well, these computer players aren't that easy. They make some smart trades, and can't be beaten very easily.

Or maybe your a couch potato and are hooked on WHEEL OF FORTUNE? Disk #170 is for you! This version has lots of phrases to guess, and I found it quite fun to play.

There were a lot of new Graphic 9 pictures on Compuserve recently. These are Computereyes pictures (sort of like Koala Pics) with excellent detail. There is a slideshow program on the disk that will display the pictures. If you have a ramdisk, transfer the pictures there for much quicker displays!

Finally, Disk #171 contains RAINBOW DOS. It's another of those "Gee, It look's nice, but what can you do with it?" programs. They took the regular Atari Dos and modified the menu to either load a different font (there are several on the disk), or you can view a Koala Picture or MicroIllustrator formated picture. There are a few other surprises too. Also on the disk is German Graphic demo called "SLOT MACHINE".

That's it for this month. I have one other problem. There still seems to be problems with the GAG disks. I had a couple returned at the meeting that would not run. If you get a bad disk, please return it. I'm very sorry for any

inconvenience you may have. I'm trying to figure out why this is happening. I now have a new drive and hope this solves the problem. One other reminder, I had a few request for blank disks at the last meeting. Once upon a time we did sell them because the price of disks was over \$2 each. We were purchasing them in bulk and were able to sell them for \$7.50 for a box of 10. But because of the rapidly falling price of blank disks, you can now purchase them for \$5, or even 29 cents each if you buy them in bulk. Since everyone could now buy disks for very reasonable prices, I decided to stop selling them. However, if you would like me to continue to stock blank disks, let me know. If there is enough interest I can purchase them in bulk and save GAG members a few dollars. But I need to know how many of you are interested.

That's it, see you at the next meeting.

JL JL JL JL JL JL JL JL

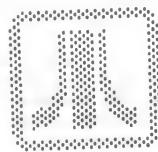
Mailing address:

Genesee Atari Group c/o Jim Steele
4711 Drummond Square, Flint, MI 48504

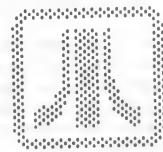
Genesee Atari Group meets on the second Wednesday of the month at the Neithercut school, located at

2010 Crestbrook Dr., Flint, MI.

Meetings begin at 6:30pm. We also have a Saturday morning session for second-shifters. This group meets on the fourth Saturday on the month, during the school year. Come on out and say "G'day"



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BIRDS AND PIECES

FROM THE

BARRIE GREEK ATARI USER GROUP

Ex-Chairman's Final -Tom Siemietkowski

This last meeting was by far the best meeting we have had in a very long time and there were many good signs. We had a record number of members plus guests and new members. New enthusiasms and new ideas were brought up from the new officers about their positions and their plans for the future. I don't know what this new spark was but it was everyone sparkling as a group. I surely hopes this carries on through the year with more members involved and willing to help the new officers.

Before I go further let me welcome the new members; Bryan Lewis, John Burke, Karen Noble and Ron Walker. There seems to be a good cross section of computer enthusiasts in our newest members and that is what the group is based on. We have needed this growth for a long time and with this new blood and interest I'm sure the slump we have been in has come to an end.

This was also our Officers Election meeting and we had a re-alignment of positions and personnel plus new involvement at various positions. I hope the changes of responsibility will stoke the fires of interest for each of the new officers. We also had some promises of extra help from other members which is always a great sign of renewed interest.

We were all asked to check for a possible new meeting place in a centrally located place in town, it seems my basement is starting to get a little crowded. We will discuss our findings at the next meeting and make our final choice then. We will still have the next meeting at my house on February 19.(Third Thursday of each month 7:00 P.M.). At this meeting Dan Egan will be demonstrating his new MIO board, ACTION cartridge and Silent Service. This meeting will also be very important in that the new officers will try to set their patterns for the next year. Bring your ideas, comments and support with you.

I have a copy of our old Constitution and some revisions have to be made, then I will get a copy to each of you after the printing.

After the business meeting Dan demonstrated the SAM program, that is the voice synthesizer for speech. One part of the program was a voice playback of anything typed in and the other was

the phonetic breakdown of words to make them sound like real speech. That second part is very time consuming but the results of better speech makes it all worth it. Dennis added to the interest of the meeting with a demonstration of his Panasonic Printer with its wide variety of innovated features.

Again let me ask you to check your mailing labels for your dues due date.

As of the beginning of the meeting Josephine gave a balance of \$164.21 in the treasury.

NEW BCAUG OFFICERS

CHAIRMAN:

Chuck Steele 964-1701

LIBRARIAN:

Todd Harris 965-5354

NEWSLETTER:

Tom Siemietkowski 963-4475

SECRETARY:

Mike Engle 964-3033

TREASURER:

Josephine Yeager 968-8401

MEMBERSHIP:

Dennis Martin 962-1024

Presidential Address

by Chuck Steele

By the looks of things, I am now your new president. Now to come through with all those campaign promises. About the promise of a new ST for every member..... Well have you ever seen a politician who really kept those campaign jokes? And about those guys that came into the meeting after the voting was all over. That is a sneaky way to keep from being an officer. Well all seriousness aside, I really want to thank everyone for their support. I was excited by the enthusiasm that was shown by the members.

I want to thank Tom for all his work last year as president. It takes a lot of work behind the scenes to get things done and keep the ball rolling. It is a job that takes the talents and efforts of many individuals working together to



make this club work. I'm looking forward to working with the officers in creating a strong and growing Atari Club here in Battle Creek. Last year was a transitional year for the club as Gary left the club after having been in the driver seat since the beginning. This change made us realize that to continue the club we all had to pitch in and do our part. I feel we are now moving forward again.

I want people to get more enjoyment from their Atari's. I feel the club can help new members by answering their questions. New members feel free to phone the officers and ask questions if you have problems. Older members, we plan to be showing new hardware and Software as it comes out, so come to the meetings and see what is new. Don't forget the Disk of the Month. Great Software at bargain, bargain prices. Looking forward to seeing everyone on Feb. 19.

P.S. If you get that New Program or New piece of hardware,(such as a sheet feeder for the printer.) Call me so we can have it Demoed at the next meeting.

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Atari Technical

LOVE AT FIRST BYTE
By: Mathew S. Howe

Welcome back to the mysteries of programming in BASIC. Before we get into this months topic I would like to announce that through the graciousness of Jim Rogers you may now get your programming and other technical questions answered on two BBS's in the Flint area. Jim is setting up not only a special message base for us but there will also be a special download area for programming utilities. Checkerboard is the place and (313) 736-9348 is the number. Look for the "wizard" and you will find an answer. This is not in effect at the time I am writing but should be in operation by the time you read this article. The Checkerboard is a 24hr 300/1200 baud atari BBS. So give us a call and see what we have to offer.

Last month we talked about some of the various BASIC implementations available for the atari 8 bit computer line. Well since last month I have had a chance to run some tests on the different BASIC's we talked about last month. One of the things I was able to do was run a benchmark program. A benchmark for those of you that don't know, is a program that does a standard calculation (or operation) so that it can be timed and used as a comparison of the different systems. I wrote a program to calculate the values of a "Fourier translation" from 2 to 100. Now it is not important that you know what a "Fourier translation" is just that it is one whopper of an equation. I timed the how long it took the program to run with the various BASIC's and here are some VERY interesting results:

IMPLEMENTATION	TIME
ATARI BASIC	100
BASIC XL (FAST MODE)	98 SEC
TURBO BASIC	13 SEC
MMG COMPILER	94 SEC
TURBO BASIC COMPILER	10 SEC

As you can readily see Turbo BASIC was the runaway winner. Now one point of interest here is that the benchmark tested only mathematical computing ability. Because of some of it's specialized functions BASIC XL is still the fastest in P/M graphics and most graphic situations. I was not able to come up with a decent graphic benchmark test yet so all we have to go on is my general impressions of speed.



The last two items on the chart are compiled programs. What is a compiler you ask? Well among other things it is the main subject of this months article. When a computer goes to execute a program it must convert it to machine language (the microprocessor doesn't know a gosub from a let). The computer can do this in one of two ways. The first is the way most micro-computers work and that is called interpreted. As each line is executed the BASIC cartridge (or whatever) translates the line to machine code then executes it. After executing the line it promptly forgets it and goes on to the next line. Besides the time it takes to translate each line there is a waste in the fact that if the computer executes the line again it will retranslate it (such as in a loop). Wouldn't it be nice if we could keep those lines in memory and then execute them at machine code speeds? Well that is what a compiler does. A compiler is the second way that a computer executes a program written in a high level language (BASIC). Most main frames use this as their method of running, that is how you can run several languages at the same time on the same machine. So let's look at how a compiler does it's thing and look at the ones compared above and see how they differ.

The MMG compiler is by far the more versatile of the two. It will compile Atari BASIC into a true machine code file that can be loaded and run from DOS as if it had always been machine language. Because the Atari has no math routines in its operating system the compiler will need to add a math routine to handle any math calculations you may use in your program. The MMG compiler gives you a choice of either floating point math or integer math. This is handy as the integer version will run several times faster than the floating point version. The test program by the way used floating point math so it was not the fastest application of the compiler. I have compiled a lot of programs using the MMG and have found their claim of three times faster in floating point or ten to fifteen times faster integer to be fairly accurate. The test program used here was the exception to that in that the compiler fell flat on it's face. In particular I have compiled several public domain games that looked interesting but were two dang slow and low and behold they fairly flew across the screen. I have found the compiler to be an excellent way to speed up graphics. There are also very few things the compiler will balk at, one is "CLOAD" and "CSAVE". The MMG also will not "CONT". As neither of these are real common commands to the disk user it is not of any concern. One thing that can cause you a little more grief is that all GOSUB's and GOTO's must use line numbers and not variables (such as GOTO 100 instead of GOTO START). If the original program was written in

this way it can be a real pain to go back and change. But other than those minor hangups the MMG will digest anything written in Atari BASIC.

The Turbo-compiler on the other hand is not quite as versatile. First and foremost it does not compile to true machine language. You must first load a "runtime" package and then load the compiled program. But even in heavy math programs as you can see from the chart it flat out flies. Again I have not had a chance to try it on a graphics type program to compare it with the MMG one on one but it does look to be very fast and efficient. There are a couple of things the Turbo-compiler doesn't like also. Those being the same as the MMG but it also does not like a loop (such as a FOR NEXT) to have more than one termination. For instance it will not compile the following sequence.

```
10 FOR Q=1 TO 100  
20 PRINT Q*A  
30 IF Q=10*A THEN NEXT Q  
40 PRINT Q+A  
50 NEXT Q
```

Notice there are two NEXT's for the FOR. This will work fine in BASIC and the MMG does not mind it but it will give the Turbo-compiler fits. The last disadvantage to the Turbo-compiler is that it is in German. Now that does not mean that you have to be bilingual to us it but you better take notes when you read the docs or it will be real hard to figure out what you are doing.

Both compilers work in the same way basically. You run the compiler tell it what basic file to compile (it has to be in the disk drive) and tell it what file name you want the file to be when done. Because the MMG makes true machine language it can be named AUTORUN.SYS and will work fine.

So what do I recommend in a compiler? Well that depends on what you want it for. The Turbo-compiler is public domain and so I recommend every programmer have a copy of it. The Turbo-compiler is great if you want to compile programs for your own use but because it requires the loading of a runtime package it might be hard for some novices or children to use the software you create with it. On the other hand the MMG will do it all and end up with a file that looks like any other machine code file when done. The major drawback to the MMG is its eighty dollar price tag and the fact it is hard to find a copy even at full retail. I myself own one though and I will use it as my first choice when compiling as it really does the job for me. Well that is about all there is on the basics of compilers so till next month:

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Atari News

Atari Announces New Products at CES

Las Vegas, NV, Jan. 8 -- In a dramatic press conference held this morning at the Consumer Electronics Show, spokesmen for the Atari Corporation introduced a panoply of new products for 1987. Highlights included three significant new additions to Atari's flagship ST line of high-performance personal computers, a revolutionary low-cost laser printer, and an IBM PC-compatible personal computer of radically new design.

The new ST computers, dubbed "Mega STs 1, 2, and 4" incorporate one, two, and four megabytes of RAM, respectively. Encased in a newly-designed system unit with integral 800K microfloppy drive and detachable, ergonomic keyboard, the new machines are visibly different from Atari's current 520ST and 1040ST models, while remaining 100% compatible with them. Additional enhancements to the Mega machines include a battery-backed realtime clock, internal mounting space for an additional circuit board, and full external routing of the 68000 bus, making their architecture "wide open" for further enhancements. "We took all our customer's suggestions on how we could improve the ST, and incorporated them in this series," said Neil Harris, Atari's Director of Marketing Communications. Delivery of the new machines, via computer specialty stores, is expected to begin shortly at a price-point of "about \$1000."

The Mega ST is housed in an independent "system unit," about 22" square by 2" high, containing the CPU, a double-sided floppy drive and an internal power supply. The ST's normal complement of ports, including those for DMA, RS-232 serial, parallel, disk, video, cartridge, MIDI, mouse, and joystick, plus an additional port for connecting the detachable, ergonomic keyboard, are included. The Mega ST system unit is reinforced to support a monitor and can be stacked with other components -- notably the enhanced 20-megabyte hard disk drive. Even fully loaded, it will take up far less room than present ST configurations.

Further expansion is possible by routing the bus outside to an external card-cage. RAM expansion up to 16 megabytes and networking capabilities will soon be available from Atari as low-cost add-ons.

Networking capabilities and sufficient memory for running multiple, co-resident applications, plus the promise of desktop publishing are sure to make the Mega ST an office favorite in the coming year.

The new Atari laser printer, shown in a prototype version, will match or exceed the performance of present laser printer systems while costing only about half as much -- about \$1500. By redesigning the standard laser printer to take advantage of the power latent in the ST line -- particularly the new Mega STs -- Atari hopes to make full-featured desktop publishing a reality at less than \$3000 for a complete system; about what a conventional laser printer costs today. Designed to interface with the ST's high-speed DMA (Direct Memory Access) port and incorporating a standard laser "engine," the Atari laser printer will produce rapid throughput at 300 dots-per-inch resolution. Though technical details have not yet been revealed, Shiraz Shivji, head of Atari's hardware engineering division, states that Atari "has designed an admirably flexible system that includes all the advantages and few of the disadvantages of present laser printer architectures. The printer will be able to handle multiple fonts and standard page-description languages at the discretion of software. Moreover, adapting present software to use the laser printer's full capabilities should be fairly simple, providing such software has been written in conformance with GEM standards."

Atari's new IBM PC-compatible machine, the Atari PC, is a radical departure from present "PC clone" designs, offering top-of-the-line compatibility and features at a record-breaking price of under \$500. Housed in a system unit similar to the Mega ST with integral 5-1/4" floppy drive and detachable XT-style keyboard, the PC/XT compatible Atari PC sports 512K RAM standard (expandable to 640K on the motherboard), an additional 256K of graphics-dedicated RAM, a custom graphics chip providing enhanced EGA, CGA, IBM Monochrome, and Hercules graphics capabilities, and a Microsoft compatible mouse. It operates at the IBM standard 4.77 Mhz or at a high-speed 8 Mhz "turbo mode," and provides for the addition of an 8087 math coprocessor at either speed. Shipments of the Atari PC will begin in March.

Standard serial, parallel, and combination video ports, and an ST-style disk port, are all included. The mouse port is based on the Microsoft INPORT chip, and an ST-type mouse is included with the system. Thus, unlike competing PC-compatible systems, the Atari PC will be able to run PC GEM, Microsoft Windows, and mouse-based programs like Microsoft Word, right out of the box.



As one would expect, Atari has paid special attention the Atari PC's graphics capabilities.

Atari has managed to shoehorn IBM Monochrome, CGA, EGA, and Hercules graphics capabilities into the Atari PC. Besides the fact that the Atari PC is the only PC-compatible to include EGA graphics as a standard feature, Atari's Shiraz Shivji notes: "our EGA is completely downward-compatible with CGA. As a result, users will experience no compatibility problems when using the lower graphics modes." What's more, Atari has announced a \$200 monochrome greenscreen monitor for use with the Atari PC that can display all its graphics modes; including the high resolution EGA color mode, using intensity gradients (gray scales) to represent colors. This is the first monitor that incorporates these capabilities. "The monitor is intelligent," says Shivji, "and recognizes the frequency of signals coming from the combination video port, adjusting itself appropriately to display whatever kind of text or graphics the machine produces."

The Atari PC is virtually 100% compatible with software available for the IBM PC and XT. While its slimline housing provides no room for mounting internal circuit cards, it is doubtful that more than a handful of users will require more capabilities than the machine provides in its off-the-shelf configuration. For those who do, Atari intends to provide an external expansion box in the near future.

Industry Report

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LAS VEGAS CES REPORT

By Jon A. Bell, Editor- START, and
Matt Loveless, Consulting Editor- START
12/Jan/1987

Atari's display at the Consumer Electronics show was a huge assemblage of black plexiglass panels, right at the entrance of the West Hall.

Atari's location was terrific -- their display was the first thing you saw when you walked into the building.

In all, there were about 20 STs, mainly 520s, which were shared by software developers. Atari had 2 of the new Mega STs (both 2 megabyte versions -- Mega ST2s); one sitting next to Antic Software's StereoTek glasses display, the other connected to the Atari laser printer. Also shown was a new videogame machine-- the "XE System". It was displayed

(not running) in a glass case at the Atari booth. The XE System is a small, squarish box which doesn't resemble a standard videogame. Its sharp angles and round, pastel buttons give it an unusual, almost art-deco appearance. According to ATARI, it is fully expandable with a plug-in keyboard and disk drive, turning it into an introductory computer. It will be available 2nd quarter of 1987. An odd piece of Atari XE hardware was their cassette program recorder -- the XC 11.

THIRD PARTY DEVELOPER NEWS

Hybrid Arts Inc., the software and hardware with a reputation for putting out the best MIDI software in the industry, showed one of the most exciting new products in the Atari world: The ADAP Soundrack Digital Sampler. ADAP stands for Analog to Digital Processor. It's a \$2000 hardware plus software system, built in conjunction with Nilford Laboratories, Inc., for the Atari ST, designed to replace equipment costing over thirty times as much. The basis of the ADAP is a racey black rack mount box with sound input and output lines, plus an interface box which plugs into the cartridge port of a one- (or more) megabyte machine.

Digital sampling is a process where sound is converted into digital patterns which a computer can store, manipulate, and play back at will. Once the sound is in the ST, it appears as a digital waveform in a window in the center of the screen.

Hybrid Arts claims the system can sample at a rate of 44.1 KHz with 16 bits of resolution -- that's compact disc quality! It even samples in stereo. Once a sample is made, it can be played back at the push of a button. You can cut, copy, and paste portions of a sample. You can even do mixing, looping, or modify the actual waveform freehand.

The ADAP system replaces some super-sophisticated musical sampling equipment by allowing you to "play" the samples from your MIDI keyboard, polyphonically, with up to eight voices going simultaneously.

- On a one-megabyte machine, allows 80 seconds of sampling at full 16-bit linear resolution at 10 KHz. Allows 20 seconds at 44.1 KHz.
- Fully MIDI compatible
- Polyphonic
- Storage of up to 64 multi-samples in memory for instant playback.
- Real-time digital effects processing (delay, echo, reverb, etc.)
- Real-time oscilloscope
- Direct from compact disc, digital to digital sampling.
- Multi-sample keyboard splits.
- Compatible with the new MIDI digital sample dump data standard. Will work with data from



other MIDI sampling devices.
- 19" black rack-mount case.
- Suggested retail price is \$1,995.

When asked why they chose the Atari ST as the host system, Frank Foster, president of Hybrid Arts, replied: "It's not like we actually 'chose' Atari. It simply couldn't be done on any other machine. Not on an Amiga. Not on a Macintosh." Now that's a compliment.

Other music news: Electronic Music Publishing House has MIDIPLAY, a real-time MIDI record/playback system which supports all 16 channels of MIDI information. List price is \$49.95, and a demo disk is \$5. They also have Musidisks, a series of pre-recorded data disks of everything from Bach to the Beatles. List is \$19.95.

NEW SOFTWARE

The Catalog software division of Antic Publishing was showing, center stage at the Atari Booth, the 3-D StereoTek Liquid Crystal Shutter Glasses along with some spectacular demos of upcoming software. The new releases include Wanderer, a point-of-view space game, CAD-3D 2.0, CyberMate, the much anticipated stereo modeling and animation system, a molecular modeling program, and Stereo Maps & Legends. Certainly the most impressive demo was the world-premiere of Tom Hudson's SteelyBoink!, a stereo ray-tracing demo illustrating a simulated depth of 8-10 inches into the ST's monitor.

WordPerfect, the best selling and highest rated full-feature word processor for the IBM PC, is now (almost) a reality on the ST. It is GEM based, using menu bars and windows, but it also supports the full array of keyboard commands familiar to users of the IBM version. Additionally, users moving from the IBM to the Atari version will also benefit from full file compatibility with WordPerfect 4.1.

WordPerfect supports footnote and endnote compilation, full keystroke macros, automatic calculation of numeric tables with the built-in math mode, complete database merge capabilities, an outline feature, a nine-keyword sorting facility for alphabetizing lists, a 115,000 word dictionary, including legal and medical terms, a five-level table of contents and index generator, a five newspaper-style columnar display, a sophisticated thesaurus, a three-level undo capability, and a virtual memory data system, allowing data to flow onto disk when computer memory is full.

WordPerfect for the Atari is scheduled for release second quarter, 1987. The suggested retail price is \$395, although a representative from WordPerfect indicated Atari users should be able to purchase it in the low \$200s.

Timeworks has released their three powerful productivity software for the ST: Word Writer ST, a word processor, Data Manager ST, and Swiftcalc ST, a spreadsheet. The Timeworks programs are designed as an integrated package. Suggested retail is \$79.95.

Although not as numerous or as flashy as the new ST software, there were several companies showing software or distributing information for the 8-bit Atari line. Zobian Controls was promoting RAOS (Rat Actuated Operating System), their operating system giving your XE a GEM-like OS, including pull-down windows, a mouse-controlled arrow-pointer, and icons. Zobian also has improved their mouse, originally called the Rat. The SuperRAT is now a two-button digital mouse, which works in conjunction with the Zobian DESKTOP program Z-DOS (included in RAOS). The SuperRAT/RAOS combination sells for \$99.00.

With somewhat less fanfare, Atari also announced a new slimline 20-megabyte Winchester drive for its ST line, incorporating an extra port for daisy-chaining with other DMA-compatible peripherals, such as the new laser printer. At the same time, Atari announced price reductions on existing ST models. A 520ST CPU will now be available for under \$300 retail, a 1040ST with monochrome monitor for around \$799, and a 1040ST with color monitor for around \$999.

Atari Technical

For XL or XE ONLY, here's an easy way to speed up your cursor. If you type "POKE 728,15:POKE 730,1", you'll get a really fast keyboard. Memory address 728 controls how long to wait after a key is pressed before repeating the character. Memory address 730 controls the speed of the repeat.

Got an OkiMate 10 (or 20) color printer and aren't very happy about the color screen dumps? The pictures CAN be improved! Your first option is to change the paper brand. I found that BROTHER PLAIN PAPER works even better than the paper that OkiMate sells you - Plus it's cheaper. 250 sheets of paper from OkiMate costs \$10, but 1000 sheets of BROTHER paper costs around \$8! Another way is a little tricky - after the dump is complete, place the picture in a warm oven for about a minute. If the paper curls a bit in the oven, place something on each corner of the paper, like a spoon. The wax will melt into each other and make bolder, more solid outlines! If you leave it in too long, the letters will melt into each other.





Last Hacks

RATED

From GENie BBS and G.R.A.S.P. Gazette

Micro was a real-time operator and dedicated multi-user. His broad-band protocol made it easy for him to interface with numerous input/output devices, even if it meant time-sharing.

One evening he arrived home just as the sun was crashing, and had parked his Motorola 68000 in the main drive (he had missed the 5100 bus that morning), when he noticed an elegant piece of liveware admiring the daisy wheels in his garden. He thought to himself, "She looks user-friendly. I'll see if she'd like an update tonight."

Mini was her name, and she was delightfully engineered with eyes like COBOL and a Prime mainframe architecture that set Micro's peripherals networking all over the place.

He browsed over to her casually, admiring the power of her twin, 32-bit floating point processors and inquired "How are you, Honeywell?" "Yes, I am well," she responded, batting her optical fibers engagingly and smoothing her console over her curvilinear functions.

Micro settled for a straight line approximation. "I'm stand-alone tonight," he said. "How about computing a vector to my base address? I'll output a byte to eat, and maybe we could get offset later on."

Mini ran a priority process for 2.6 milliseconds, then transmitted "BK, I've been dumped myself recently, and a new page is just what I need to refresh my disks. I'll park my machine cycle in your background and meet you inside." She walked off, leaving Micro admiring her solenoids and thinking, "Wow, what a global variable. I wonder if she'll like my firmware."

They sat down at the process table to a top-of-form feed of fiche and chips and a bucket of Baudot. Mini was in conversational mode and expanded on ambiguous arguments while Micro gave occasional acknowledgements, although, in reality, he was analyzing the shortest and least critical path to her entry point. He finally settled on the old "Would you like to see my benchmark subroutine," but Mini was again one step ahead.

Suddenly, she was up and stripping off her parity bits to reveal the full functionality of her operating system software. "Let's get BASIC, You RAM," she said. Micro was loaded by this stage, but his hardware policing module had a processor of its own and was in danger of overflowing its output buffer, a hang-up that Micro had consulted his analyst about. "Core," was all he could say.

Micro soon recovered, however, when she went down on the DEC and opened her device files to reveal her data set ready. He accessed his fully packed root device and was just about to start pushing her CPU stack, when she attempted an escape sequence.

"No, no!" she piped. "You're not shielded."

"Reset, Baby," he replied. "I've been debugged."

But I haven't got my current loop enabled, and I can't support child processes," she protested.

"Don't run away," he said, "I'll generate an interrupt."

"No, that's too error prone, and I can't abort because of my design philosophy."

Micro was locked in by this stage, though, and he could not be turned off. But she soon stopped his thrashing by introducing a voltage spike into his main supply, whereupon he fell over with a head crash and went to sleep.

"Computers," she thought as she compiled herself, "All they ever think of is HEX."



"I think I found the human in your code."



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